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NOTES AND FRAGMENTS.

A CORRECTION.—The translations published in the April QUARTERLY, under the head *L'Abeille Americaine*, should have been credited to Mr. William Beer, Librarian of Howard Memorial Library, New Orleans.

The Austin Papers, the precious collection so carefully guarded by Colonel Bryan during his life, are left by his will to be given to some State institution, according to the judgment of his executors, these being his son, Guy M. Bryan, and his daughter, Miss Hally Ballinger Bryan, and of his nephew, Judge Beauregard Bryan. In making this provision, however, Colonel Bryan expresses himself in favor of the State University, and it is understood that the bequest will follow his preference. The papers are now stored in the basement of the State capitol, but it is expected that they will be transferred to the vault of the University this fall.

Miss Casis, whose work has been so helpful in the past to students of the University and others wishing to use the Spanish sources of Southwestern history, is again copying documents from the *Archivo General* in the city of Mexico. Mr. R. C. Clark, who graduated from the University of Texas in June, and who holds a graduate scholarship in the University of Wisconsin for next year, is assisting her. Miss Casis expects to complete during her stay in Mexico the work begun last summer of copying the two volumes in the archives entitled *Documents para la Historia de la Provincia de Texas*. These documents contain the history of the beginnings of the province, and of the first ninety years under Spanish domination. Duplicate copies are to be made, one set for the State library, which is to pay part of the expense, and one for the University.

LETTER FROM A "MIER" PRISONER TO HIS MOTHER.—Among all the tragic incidents of the history of the Texas Revolution and the later efforts to maintain her dearly bought independence, none equal in pathos those which deal with the prison life of the unfort-

unfortunate men who, in 1842, banded together for the invasion of Mexico, and became known in history as the Mier expedition.

The term "Decimated Mier Prisoners" is aptly applied to those of this expedition, who having been made prisoners by the Mexicans, were marched to the Hacienda Salado, where an escape was planned and effected. After enduring untold hardships most of them were recaptured, and having been brought back to Salado, were granted a commutation of the sentence of death, and were allowed the privilege of deciding their fate after the manner of a lottery. The prisoners numbered one hundred and seventeen; so, that number of beans, seventeen of which were black, the rest white, were placed in a jar and held over the heads of the unfortunate men, and they were compelled to draw, each a single bean, knowing that the black ones represented the death of seventeen of their number. No more cruel device could have been conceived; the situation was one to try the fortitude of the most heroic, and some of the prisoners were mere boys, but instances of self-sacrifice were not wanting, and all met their fate bravely. They had learned the lesson of the stoic; they feared not to die, but feared a coward's death.

Relics of this most tragic event are extremely rare; hence the value attached to the following letter from one of the prisoners to his mother, written just after drawing a black bean, and about half an hour before he was led out blindfolded to be shot. It was written on coarse paper with a pen and ink, and in a firm hand. The execution took place March 25th, 1843:

"MEXICO.

"Dear Mother:

"I write you under the most awful feelings that a son ever addressed a mother, for in half hour my doom will be finished on earth, for I am doomed to die by the hands of the Mexicans for our late attempt to escape the [torn out] G. Santa Anna that every tenth man should be shot. We drew lots. I was one of the unfortunates. I cannot say anything more. I die, I hope, with firmness. Farewell, may God bless you, and may He in this my last hour, forgive and pardon all my sins. A. D. Headenberge will should he be [blot] able to inform you. Farewell,

"Your affectionate son,

"R. H. DUNHAM."

The foregoing letter was obtained through the courtesy of W. P. Doran, of Hempstead, it having been given him by the sister of Mr. Dunham, Mrs. R. J. Wood, who also lives at Hempstead. She is now very old, and can remember nothing of the manner in which her mother came into the possession of the letter. It was probably carried by one of the survivors of the "death lottery" through their long, weary march to the City of Mexico, and carefully preserved until his own release enabled him to return home and deliver the precious missive in person.

ADELE B. LOOSCAN,
Historian, Daughters of the Republic of Texas.

THE STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATUE FUND.—Mrs. Joseph B. Dibrrell, chairman of the Stephen F. Austin Statue Fund Committee, has sent out the following circular, which will explain itself, and which needs no word of exhortation to commend it to the patriotism of the Texas people:

"The Daughters of the Republic of Texas, acting through this committee, have formed the desire to place in one of the niches in the capitol at Washington, D. C., the marble statue of Stephen F. Austin. Some years ago Congress, prompted by motives patriotic and for the purpose of encouraging art, passed an act authorizing each State to place the statues of two of its most representative men in niches provided in the national capitol for such purpose. The Legislature of Texas has authorized the Daughters of the Republic of Texas to fill one of the niches set aside to Texas with the statue of Stephen F. Austin, known to history as the 'Father of Texas,' and one of her most unselfish patriots. This laudable work must be accomplished by the efforts of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas by means of soliciting subscriptions for such fund, by entertainments and by all other proper means calculated to effect the object designed. The statue can be executed for the sum of \$4000, and with little additional funds can be placed in the niche awaiting it.

"All lovers of Texas and of her early unparalleled history are appealed to for help by liberal contributions, and by all other means, to raise the fund desired. At the suggestion of the chairman of the committee of the Stephen F. Austin Statue Fund, Hon. W. B. Wortham, president of the First National Bank of Austin,

Texas, has been chosen treasurer. The names of all those making contributions and the amounts contributed by each will be published in the annual report of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas.

"It is the purpose of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas to ask the next Legislature to fill the remaining niche in the national capitol with the statue of the illustrious Gen. Sam Houston. Stephen F. Austin was first selected owing to his chronological precedence, and the Daughters, knowing the State would respond to the call for the Houston statue, and realizing the large amount necessary for both, preferred to rely upon the generosity of the public for the Stephen F. Austin fund.

"We hope you will send to the chairman of this committee, Mrs. Joseph B. Dibrell, at Seguin, Texas, any contribution you may see fit to make for this fund, and the same will be promptly forwarded to the treasurer by her. This work must be performed and without delay, and every daughter and son of the Republic of Texas is earnestly requested to go to work in earnest and assist in accomplishing the great work now begun. They are reminded of the patriotism and unfaltering courage and energy of their fathers, and they must not recognize the word failure."

FUNERAL OF THE "HEROES OF THE ALAMO."—Everybody who knows the story of the Alamo remembers how, by the orders of Santa Anna, the bodies of its gallant defenders were, as Yoakum expresses it, "thrown into heaps and burnt"; but perhaps fewer know that their ashes ever received the honor of a military funeral, and there is reason to believe that most of those who know are in error as to the place of interment.

Col. Juan N. Seguin, who took command of San Antonio for the Texans after the battle of San Jacinto, says, in a letter dated March 28, 1889: "I collected the fragments, and placed them in an urn, and buried it in the Cathedral of San Fernando immediately in front of the altar—that is, in front of the railing and near the steps." This statement has gained a good deal of publicity through its incorporation by Hon. Seth Shepard in his monograph, "The Siege and Fall of the Alamo" (in *A Comprehensive History of Texas*, I, 637-48), and has received general credence, notwithstanding the vehement denials of the San Fernando clergy. It appears, however, that Seguin's memory played him

false; for, in the *Telegraph and Texas Register* of March 28, 1837, there is a detailed description of the funeral, to which, of course, his simple statement, made after a lapse of exactly fifty-two years, must give first place. The account in the *Telegraph* is as follows:

"In conformity with an order from the general commanding the army at headquarters, Col. Seguin, with his command stationed at Bexar, paid the honors of war to the remains of the heroes of the Alamo; the ashes were found in three places, the two smallest heaps were carefully collected, placed in a coffin neatly covered with black, and having the names of Travis, Bowie and Crockett engraved on the inside of the lid, and carried to Bexar, and placed in the parish church, where the Texian flag, a rifle and sword were laid upon it for the purpose of being accompanied by the procession, which was formed at 3 o'clock on the 25th of February; the honors to be paid were announced in orders of the evening previous, and by the tolling knell from day-break to the hour of interment; at 4 o'clock the procession moved from the church in Bexar in the following order:

"Field officers; staff officers; civil authorities; clergy; military not attached to the corps, and others; pall bearers; coffin; pall bearers; mourners and relatives; music; battalion; citizens.

"The procession then passed through the principal street of the city; crossed the river; passed through the principal avenue on the other side; and halted at the place where the first ashes had been gathered. The coffin was then placed upon the spot, and three volleys of musketry were discharged by one of the companies; the procession then moved to the second spot, whence part of the ashes in the coffin had been taken, where the same honors were paid; the procession then proceeded to the principal spot and place of interment, where the graves had been prepared; the coffin had been placed upon the principal heap of ashes, when Col. Seguin delivered a short address in Spanish, followed by Major Western in English, and the ashes were buried. * * *."

From this description, could not some one well acquainted with San Antonio locate, at least approximately, the place of the burial?

This extract from the *Telegraph* has been printed before, being quoted by a writer from Houston, Texas, who signed himself C. H. C., in the *Magazine of American History*, II, 309-11.

EUGENE C. BARKER.